



Hawaii's Watershed Partnerships: A Successful Public-Private Collaboration and Investment in Our Watersheds

Watershed Partnerships are alliances of over 60 public and private landowners and partners committed to the common value of protecting over one million acres of forested watersheds across the state. No other initiative in the state brings together so many partners effectively leveraging resources across such large landscapes to target key watershed threats.

Hawai'i must protect our watersheds because we rely on them to:

- **Recharge water supplies** that businesses & lives depend on everyday
- **Control erosion & run off**, keeping waters safe to swim and fish
- **Mitigate flooding** since forests can slow down rains
- **Create jobs** and bring in funds to support local economies
- **Provide habitat** for plants and animals found nowhere else in the world
- **Supply culturally important plants** for hula, crafts and medicine
- **Serve as educational & recreational places** for communities & schools
- **Create eco-tourism** opportunities
- **Protect public health** by providing clean water and air
- **Mitigate the effects of climate change.**

...there is not a contradiction between economic growth and sound environmental practices... that's why my economic recovery plan is going to be focused on, how can we make a series of down payments on things that we should have done 10 or 20 or 30 years ago but have delayed?" President-elect Barack Obama, 12/15/2008

Fencing, removal of feral hoofed-animals and replanting effectively restores watershed health by creating a natural sponge that allows rainfall to soak into our water-supplying aquifers.

Fenced and restored forest on Maui



Regrowth of forest understory post fencing and animal removal on Hawai'i island

A UH study estimates in the Ko'olau Mountains alone, watershed services are worth up to \$14 billion over 20 years.

Watershed Partnerships have a proven track record of making on-the-ground differences:

- **300,000 acres managed** for feral ungulates and destructive invasive species
- **Planted 83,000 native and endangered plants** for restoration
- **Involved 5,500 volunteers** including community members, teachers, and school groups in projects
- **40 miles of protective forest fence** completed
- **\$6.5 million pumped into the state's economy** by supporting local jobs, businesses, and communities
- **Highly trained and committed staff implement focused management plans** targeting actions against key watershed threats which put boots and shovels on the ground to protect watershed resources.

What happens when we neglect investing in the protection of our watershed forests?

On Moloka'i, thousands of feral goats have destroyed the vegetation on the south slope of this watershed. As a result, in heavy rains, the soil washes onto coral reefs, affecting fishing and swimming. The East Moloka'i Watershed Partnership is fencing the remaining forest to protect it from ungulates, conducting ungulate removal, beginning vegetation restoration, and developing sedimentation ponds to collect the sediments before it reaches the ocean.



- Decreased water supplies available for people and businesses
- Negative impacts on recreation from dirty water
- Negative impression on visitors and tourism
- Negative effects on human health
- Destruction of native plants, animals, and habitats
- Increased sedimentation of the reef, leading to death of corals
- Loss of educational opportunities for children to learn about Hawaii's unique environments
- Destruction of habitat for fish
- Loss of cultural practices
- Non-compliance with federal and state laws protecting endangered species
- Decreased quality of life
- Increased carbon in the atmosphere
- Much higher costs required for restoration (versus cost-effective prevention)

“There are many places with great people who have a gracious spirit but few places have clean air, water and pristine oceans, as we do in Hawai‘i. This has made me want to double our efforts to protect our natural resources...[a clean environment is not only good for residents, it’s good for business].”

- Governor Lingle, sharing her renewed focus on protecting and preserving Hawaii's natural resources after returning from a recent trip to Asia and speaking at the Maui Visitors Bureau 12/10/2008

To learn more about the nine individual Watershed Partnerships or the statewide Hawai‘i Association of Watershed Partnerships (HAWP), please visit www.hawp.org or contact HAWP coordinator Christine Ogura at either 808-388-9699 or coordinator@hawp.org.